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Message Text

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SUBJECT: PAPAZOV VISIT: SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

REF: STATE 24460

1. AS MEMBER OF THE SECRETARIAT OF BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE, PAPAZOV MAY BE HIGHEST RANKING BULGARIAN PARTY OFFICIAL EVER TO VISIT US. IN GOVERNMENT HE HAS OCCUPIED MINISTERIAL-LEVEL POSITIONS FOR MANY YEARS. EMBASSY BELIEVHAT TO CONFINE DISCUSSION AND MAKE SUGGESTIONS WITHIN PAPAZOV'S SCSTP COMPETENCE ALONE WOULD BE LESS FRUITFUL THAN ACROSS-THE-BOARD APPROACH TOUCHING ON VARIOUS AREAS OF GOB-USG RELATIONS.

2. EMBASSY OFFICERS, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR, HAVE VIRTUALLY NO ACCESS TO BULGARIAN PARTY OFFICIALS. IV GRANTEE SHOPOV WAS BREAKTHROUGH AND EMBASSY HOPES PAPAZOV SIGNING INDICATES POTENTIAL FOR GREATER CONTACTS, INCLUDING HIGH-LEVEL CP MEMBERS AND YOUNG PARTY LEADERS. FOR EXAMPLE, EMBASSY HAS INVITED, THROUGH MFA, DIMITUR STANISHEV, CHIEF, FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
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OF CC, TO VISIT US ON IV GRANT. ALSO, WE HAVE DISCUSSED INFORMALLY EXCHANGE OF YOUNG POLITICAL LEADERS WITH BULGARIAN OFFICIALS. INFORMAL REACTION TO STANISHEV VISIT HAS BEEN NONCOMMITTAL AND TO YOUNG LEADERS EX-CHANGE POSITIVE, BUT HIGHER-LEVEL (E.G., PAPAZOV) IN-FLUENCE IS NEEDED TO ADVANCE BOTH PROJECTS.

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3. EMBASSY BADLY NEEDS INCREASED ACCESS FOR ITS OFFICERS TO BOTH SCSTP OFFICIALS AND OTHER MINISTRY AND COMMITTEE OFFICIALS AS WELL. WHILE OPERATIONAL RELATIONS WITH SCSTP (E.G., P&C OFFICER'S WITH DESPOTOV) AND WITH BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES ARE FAIRLY GOOD, WE CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES OF ACCESS TO SOME OTHER "COMPETENT AUTHORITIES," WITH FREQUENT AND LONG DELAYS IN RESPONSES. WE ARE HAMPERED BY GOB BUREAUCRATIC DEMANDS TO CHANNEL REQUESTS THROUGH MFA PROTOCOL OFFICE, A REQUIREMENT OBVIOUSLY NOT LEVIED ON BULGARIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS IN WASHINGTON. WITH GREATER US-BULGARIAN ACTIVITIES, FREQUENTLY REQUIRING PROMPT RESPONSES, DIRECT CONTACT WITH OPERATIONAL PERSONNEL WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US AND IN FACT USEFUL TO BULGARIAN AGENCIES -- E.G.N IN MEETING DEADLINES. "THAT'S OUR POLICY, EVERYONE HAS TO DO IT," MAY BE LIKELY RESPONSE. IF GOB UNWILLING TO RELAX ITS REQUIREMENT TO CHANNEL APPOINTMENT REQUESTS THROUGH MFA PROTOCOL OFFICE, EMBASSY OFFICERS WOULD FIND IT HELPFUL IF, AFTER ARRANGING INITIAL APPOINTMENT THROUGH PROTOCOL, THEY COULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE PERMITTED TO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL HANDLING A PARTICULAR PROBLEM OR ACTIVITY.

4. AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE, DEPARTMENT MIGHT USEFULLY ATTEMPT TO INTEREST PAPAZOV IN EMBASSY LIBRARY FACILI-
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TIES--UNDER-UTILIZED DUE TO LACK OF BULGARIAN VISITIORS. WHILE HOLDINGS ARE MODEST, WE HAVE PUBLICATIONS IN VARIOUS FIELDS, INCLUDING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, TRADE, AND INDUSTRY WHICH MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO SCSTP ADMINISTRATORS AND SPECIALISTS AS WELL AS OTHERS. WE CAN OBTAIN COPIES OF CURRENT JOURNAL ARTICLES FOR SCSTP PERSONNEL QUICKLY IF WE KNOW OF THEIR INTERESTS. CONTACT IS REQUIRED. MATERIALS ARE NEITHER POLEMICAL OR PROPAGANDISTIC. IN ADDITION TO PRINTED MATERIALS, EMBASSY HAS OR CAN PROCURE AUDIO-VISUAL INFORMATION OF INTEREST TO SCSTP. REGARDING RADIO AND TV, POST'S OFFERINGS TO GOB ARE NOT BEING ACCEPTED.

5. DESPITE IMPROVED USG-GOB RELATIONS, EXEMPLIFIED BY THIS SIGNING, BULGARIAN MEDIA CONTINUES HEAVY-HANDED, OFTEN VITUPERATIVE, ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA, PORTRAYING US IN UNFAVORABLE LIGHT (SOME THEMES: RACISM, POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT, NEUTRON BOMB). WE EXTOL FREE EXPRESSION BUT REQUEST FAIR AND BALENCED TREATMENT.
GARTHOFF

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